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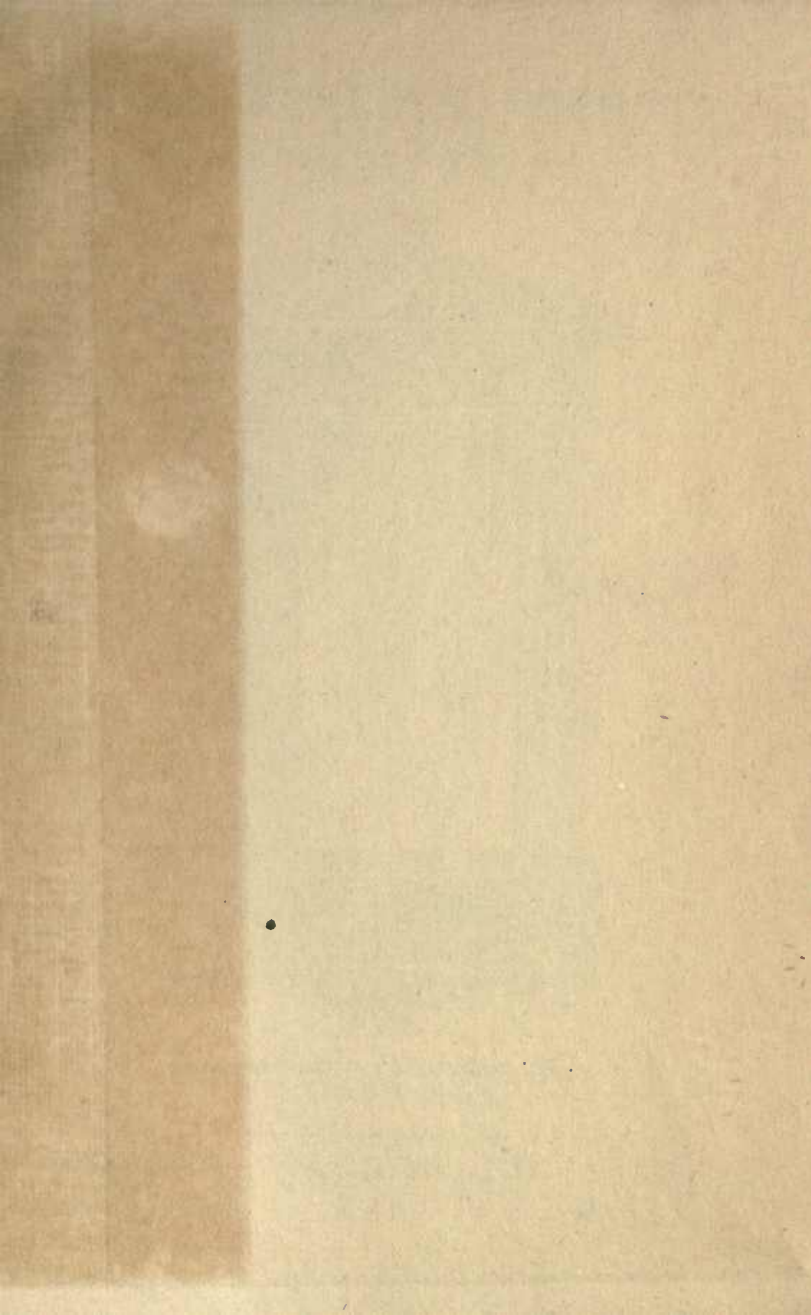
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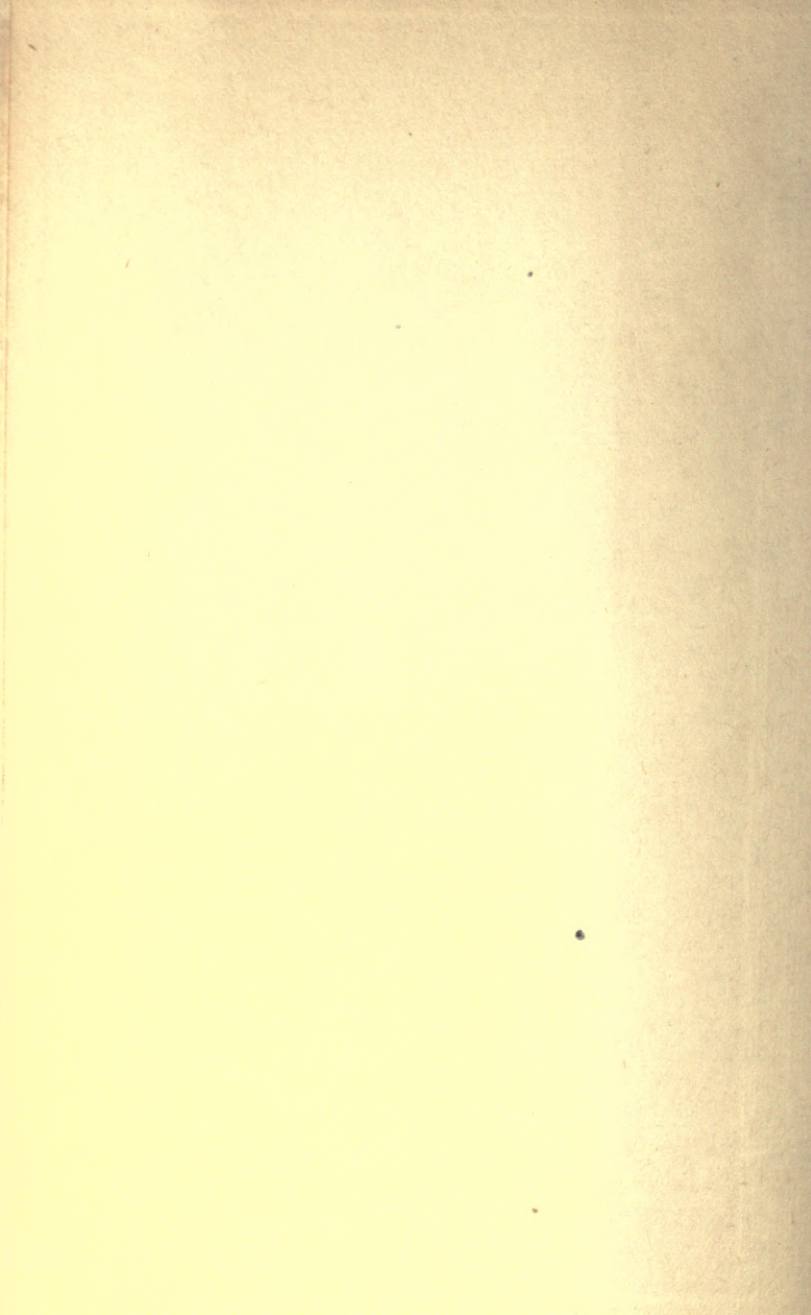
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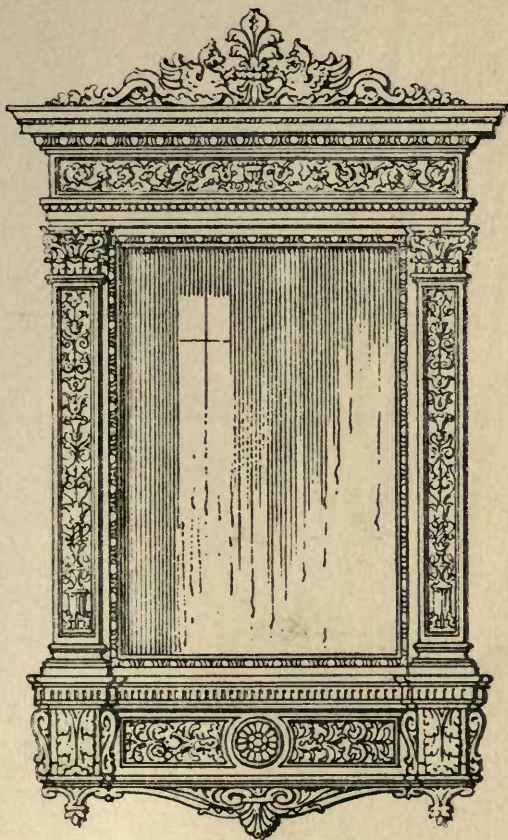
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IN AN ITALIAN MIRROR

By VERE DI RAVELLI.



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by SIR CHARLES ALLOM, KT.

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Annex

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I. B.

In principis nobilissimique amici amati memoriam.

Ille mi par esse Deo videtur.

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GIANETTA DINANDRI.

The crystal-pointed stars broke their laughter o'er your face:
Time, the eternal lover, held you tight in his embrace
Like an arrow from a bow you were shot into space,
Gianetta Dinandri !

Men have loved you for the body the gods to you gave :
Death, the merciless lover, cast it aside in the grave,
Tho' you fought for it, none of your beauty you could save,
Gianetta Dinandri !

But I shall wait outside when your soul gains Liberty,
And touch your lips in space for you and I would be free
To say and live the things that we dreamt in secrecy,
Gianetta Dinandri !

The Southern night across our cheeks will throw its exquisite
scent,
And star ensewn will pitch o'er us its blue silken tent,
Nature will weave for us a nocturne of ravishment,
Gianetta Dinandri !

Little earthly hindrances will then have passed away,
Sudden frowns that unlooked-for irritations betray,
The maze of littleness in which we often went astray,
Gianetta Dinandri !

We shall have roses that have forgotten how to fade,
And sunshine gilding the soft grasses of lawn and glade,
With music and laughter tread the future unafraid,
Gianetta Dinandri !

For I shall only see your soul alive, fresh and young,
And scorn the wrinkles, that the gossips with evil tongue
Have netted o'er your face, with high hopes I would be stung,
Gianetta Dinandri !

Jewels you have from many men of wealth and pedigree,
I can only bring you this jewelled song of you and me,
That may swing us on the pinions of posterity,
Gianetta Dinandri !

Ad Carolum Secundum.

FROM A WINDOW IN THE PALAZZO BALBI.

In my arms I have held the Venetian dawn,
A pale golden butterfly spotted with pink and blue,
Wings of gauze iridescent, a glittering pawn
The old gods painted and gave me instead of you.

A CRYSTAL GOBLET.

Across the darkened room your white face seemed
Like a crystal goblet fashioned cunningly,
Was it Michael Angelo had the key
Of its making, as on a warm night he dreamed
That the passions of Egypt and Greece gleamed
Like golden wine trembling in ecstasy
Between your arms? Did Pollaiuolo free
This fancy of the gods, and subtly schemed
The long slender form with exotic grace?
Your lips have drunk all the loves of the world,
That is why I fear them, when loose, uncurled
They lie on mine quenching my thirst apace,
Yet I feel to a nameless pit I am hurled,
Shattered and forgotten by you in space.

FEAST DAY.

And to-day the bells are ringing
In churches of Maddaloni,
Children decked with flowers singing,
Smiles on face of maid and crony.

It is my little mother's feast,
And my heart with narcissi crowned,
And my eyes with soft tears surceased,
When I list to that joyous sound.

For I am not there, tho' the ringing
I hear thro' a veil from afar,
Like tenderest music swinging
And vanishing like a star.

At Maddaloni is my soul
Before my mother on its knees,
And in its hands it holds the bowl
Of love unguessed that no one sees.

Ad Matrem.

AT THE SHRINE OF VENUS.

I have danced at night with the Unicorn
In the Circus Maximus at Rome,
Overhead gleamed the sky like a dome
Star-scattered. On his sharp pointed horn
The moon threw swords of light till the morn.

Earth turned away her eyes from the scene,
Tempted herself beyond feeble will,
Alone, passionate, unrestrainable,
In a forgotten lawless demesne,
We danced together behind the screen.

THE SURRENDER OF APOLLO.

I dreamt at Venice in the Palace Vendramin
Within my arms your sweet body of snows
Melted neath my kisses. Sudden arose,
Tumultuous, a thousand fires within
Your throbbing soul ; forgetting race and kin
That long, too long desire in you had froze,
Your spirit leapt to mine and dropt its pose,
From my lips the first fruits of love to win.

Lingering on the waves, the pale yellow dawn
Passed by us like folds of a silken mist
Brimful with song. Your soul that I had kissed
For a little space from mine was withdrawn,
To the dream of cities your music poured,
As in love's chariot to the gods you soared.

SEASCAPE NEAR CASTELLAMARE.

Her silver breasts upon the sea
Lay the pale moon,
The waters heaved incessantly,
Craving love's boon.

No rounder nor whiter than mine
Are the moon's breasts,
Rising and falling on the brine
To love's behests.

Like dreams mingle in the night,
Foolish but real,
Our spirits sought to unite
The things we feel.

Upon us two its glories poured
The silken dawn,
Like dreams dispersed and unexplored
We were withdrawn.

And from the sea the pallid moon
Lifted her breasts,
The waters swayed in silent swoon
Their foaming crests.

M E L E A G E R .

I have seen the freshness of beauty pass
Imperceptibly like a shadow pale,
Clutching with wild hands the light sundered veil,
Vanish like the green on late summer grass
Day by day, yet the soul in its morass
Of unutterable pain did not quail
As from her slipped the impenetrable mail,
With which defiant she faced the hour glass.

Meleager ! ever you will retain
The spirit of your fatal loveliness,
Time its brand-iron on your face will press,
And o'er your white limbs sweep its hurricane,
Your soul in its splendour mine will enchain
For ever, and age me not dispossess.

Ad Fratrem.

LIGURIAN SEASCAPE.

A child and I in the bay of Spezia set sail,
Calm, like a river was the sea,
His blue eyes twinkled merrily,
Mine were stern concerned at the helm with every detail.

A sudden gust of wind swept up noisily from the deep,
Waves grew like monster mushrooms high,
The boat creaked, heaved a heavy sigh
And bent over on its side like a head dropped to sleep.

At first mixed with the waves' roar came the boy's glad laughter
Ringing like a bell o'er the din,
Then fear leapt to his eyes, his skin
Was paled and silence lowered her cloak on him after.

To my side he crept and held my unsteady knees,
This proud boy who did not fear death,
Who vaunted courage his breath,
Till the squall scudded away o'er the seething high seas.

To Waller.

IN AN OLD GARDEN AT PAUSILIPPO.

I have loved with my body and been tired
Of a night before the dawn,
From two eager arms withdrawn,
From bartered carmined lips and soft limbs hired,

Silent you and I have sat thro' the night,
Holding hands in happiness,
Transfigured in our caress,
Like angels blessed in holiness white.

P L E D G E .

In the Villa Lante, thro' the water gardens we walked at noon
Neath a clear matrix sky, the flowers raised open eyes to the
sun,
Twas there, trembling with anxiousness, I asked from your
sweet lips the boon,
That to-night, with rise of the moon, would draw us together
as one.

RITUAL.

Let me hold your soul like an offering
To the god of love. In a chalice chased
By Cellini's hand I will have you placed
On an altar covered with flowers of spring,
And cupids will perform the ministering.
I shall be the high priest in vestments faced
With orient pearls and green jewels graced,
And a choir of youths will dance and sing.
Paralysed with fear I shall drink your soul,
Is it gentle or light or passionate,
Shall it lead me to vice degenerate,
Shall I emerge from this potion heart-whole?
What matter, but, dear, give me your parole
That you will love me whatever my fate.

IN THE GROTTO D'AVERNO.

Love is a pitfall dark and deep,
Yet with rope round waist I descend,
Shall I find of jewels no end
And pearls for which women's hearts weep?

I have come back covered with slime,
To my garments clinging a toad
Dislodged from the sombre abode,
Yet I go down time after time.

Are you waiting hidden for me
In the murky depths of some cave,
And if all the grime I can brave
Shall I find you and set you free?

ON THE BRIDGE OF CALIGULA.

You are not my first love, to be frank with you
At Baiae there was one, sculptured like a god
With spirit that the highways of thought trod,
Calm motionless face with cold eyes of blue,
Grape hair-clusters that low on forehead grew,
With rhythm the slender white feet were shod,
A soul unforgiving ready with rod
To chastise cruelly. I seemed to pursue
Not love, but its colour, movement or shape
As they crystallized into an attitude
Of grace. But in you all these I exclude,
I see them not, nor wish to, as I escape
In dreams to pastures of orange and grape
In southern lands 'neath laurel-trees bedewed

P E A C E .

Were I in Italy
By the Sicilian sea,
Drinking the sapphire wave,
Slender, lithe and concave,
With my eager yearning eyes !
Were I on the curved skies,
Afloat on shining air,
Without fear, without care,
Like a bird who knew its nest
Perched on the black rocky crest.

To Mrs. Chadwick.

S H A D E .

After a night of love at the Villa d'Este
I rested,
Neath the cypress trees near the cascade,
Stringing a song-necklace of pale jade
Sat a nightingale, hidden beneath the thick leaves
Brown breasted.

STARLIGHT AT TERRACINA.

In a moment of passionate repose
Your heart to me you proffered ; like a bowl
Gold and chased with melodies from your soul,
Filled with scented flowers, jasmine and rose,
And incense exotic unknown to those
Who stunt their love with insensate control.
But grave misgivings fill me that your whole
Exalted soul will ne'er its warmth disclose.
Shall I lay you on the spit of the Orient
Where the sun burns and hot is the calm night,
Or shall I place your body in the white
Bespeckled moonshine neath Italy's tent,
Where hanging star-clusters will kiss your lips,
As they lie in the sky like jewelled ships ?

SAINT CHARLES.

I see Isola Bella rise
Like a flower painted daughter
From the azure rippling water
And laid on its breast neath the skies.

Did Charles Borromeo come there,
Overheated from the brave world,
When behind him passions he hurled
And found peace in this haven fair?

For his love I am sure was like ours,
Splendid and clear and eternal,
Preserving the god-like kernel
Of instinct pure like first spring flowers.

Trust me, from beliefs I will not wean
Your often erring soul away,
But your hands I would hold and say,
"There's no shame in love that has been."

For one small hour on earth we play
At wisdom and love, then we go
Thro' the gate to darkness and woe
Or joy, who knows, each our own way.

BELFRY OF THE DUOMO, FLORENCE.

Giotto's belfry, adolescent athlete !
Agile strength veiling slender curves of grace
Raises adoring to the sun his face,
Poised straight like an arrow on his feet,
Inhuman neither tremor nor heart beat,
A monster of beauty of pride and race.
Could I find in those silent lines a trace
Of response or some momentary heat,
I would tempt you and draw your lips to mine,
Trembling pass eager hands o'er your skin,
Breathe love into that lifeless mould, and win
One mad night of lecherous carouse and wine
From centuries of silence. I shall pine
After thro' ages and pay for my sin.

THE CYPRESS.

At Brissago on the Lake Maggior
The cypress neath the spring moon dreams
That over the waters spreads its gleams.
What waves have not washed that verdant shore?

What winds have not trembled thro' those leaves?
Days and nights have broken o'er that head
Their bowls of sun and stars and bespread
That swart brow with jewels, and yet it grieves.

Looking back thro' my life thus I stand;
I have been crowned with Love and have tired,
Now you have come, are you the desired,
Or but another figure on sand?

REVERIE.

You have peopled my room with exquisite dreams,
Fanciful pictures that cleave to the wall,
Antique tapestries designed to enthrall,
Pages perfectly shaped, by running streams
Leading horses on whose flanks sunlight gleams.
Alone oft I sit and look at them all,
Your elusive soul bit by bit I recall,
Pondering deep on the love that only seems.
Tho' the vase is empty, gorgeous spring-flowers
Fresh from the hidden pleasaunce of your soul
Overflow the polished sides, and the whole
Unfettered spirit of spring passes the hours
In dancing and joy. Tis thus Time devours
The days as into infinite space they roll.

Ad amicam Maatiem.

P O R T R A I T .

You will follow the call of the South,
The songs of the nightingale,
That passionate longing exhale,
Almond blossoms, tender and pale
Spun dimly in the dawn's veil,
Laughing eyes and a boy's ruddy mouth.
And you will recognise me in them all,
Unforgettable kisses will recall.
And where I am your heart will be,
Yearning for me in ecstasy,
As a sweet flower thirsts in drouth.

THE SPIRIT OF BEAUTY.

Once at Maddoloni I saw a tree
Slender and gracefully bending ;
From its branches were descending
Avalanches of flowers prodigally.

Like a sensitive boy
Replete with secret joy
The curved stem in yearning arms I clasped,
I kissed the spirit of beauty and gasped.

The boy in me is apparent, not real.
'Tis not a tree I seek but you
With your flowering eyes of blue,
Your body yielding in my arms I feel,
The spirit of beauty
Creeps out from you to me.
And the hunger I have for you is stilled,
The cup of my soul with wonder is filled.

Were you a tree or flower I could tend
Unceasingly you night and day,
'Neath your sweet branches I should play
Till the night falls, and stars suspend
In the heavens above.
This is the hour of Love.
Come, fulfil it, for soon the yellow Dawn
Will kiss your scarlet lips with passion drawn.

SYMPOSITION.

Charmides is in love again they say,
And smile with knowing winks, they know the tale
Too well, so oft repeated night and day,
With eager questions they their friend assail,
Who is it? and then, but why do you love?
Charmides laughed and asked the Gods above.

But now a glass of strong Egyptian wine
Had loosed his mind and tongue,
Another bowl, "Shall I my tale outline,
To you remorseless sots?" With that he flung
His chlamys aside, his beautiful face,
Tho' flushed with wine, was soft and full of grace.

"A musician am I, moulding some harmony,
Songs from the violet stars I steal.
From the full copper moons smiling in brilliancy
Sensuousness. I can reveal
Most mysterious emotions, suck from the powdered Bowl
Of perpetual blue the juice of its mystic soul.

When my song is on you bent, freed from insane desire,
Lost in myself my soul becomes nil,
And I know that I am caught up in the earth's fierce fire,
Lost to myself my mind and will,
That's why I love!" Charmides was still.

We turned away our eyes for fear he would see
How we all were creatures of poverty;
Charmides was so young; another glass
Of strong Egyptian wine his lips did pass.
Once more inspired with eyes of flaming blue

He hypnotised us all with something new.
"Poet am I, I juggle with word and rhythm,
To Love and maddening passion I tune my loved lyre,
Wrapt they listen, eyes are becoming dewd, dim,
Tears are mixed with thoughts and my poem inspire,
Drawn in my net entire.

Then applause is heard thro' the darkening long hall,
Laurel brought and thrust on my throbbing white brow,
Life itself is lost in that span of deep thrall,
Winds I mount and battering waves to me bow,
Stars from their settings fall.

On diaphanous cloudlets I ride to meet the moon,
Fold about her slender nude form a thin veil,
For she is mine this night and the foretaste makes me swoon,
None behold her flesh but my eyes, no detail
Escape them, no fire fail."

"And that is why I love?" Charmides murmured low,
And all our hearts for pity were moved to overflow.

Again Charmides spoke but with a veiled voice,
As if he were the instrument not the mind,
That poured forth its treasures, piecemeal; not the choice
Having to control his will, blind.

"For we are all the quest of a secret thing,
Pursuing us thro' life, and we know it not.
What kind 'tis formed of, devil's make? God's toy tantling?
Child of a human complot?

Sometimes we flee its power in a song divine,
Sometimes we flout its favour in a draught of wine,
Sometimes we kill to still the void, hoping to confine
Our thoughts in this slaughter internecine.

Sometimes we love, in some human heart we seek
Oblivion, and shut on this Thing the door,
At length disgorged from prison, sick, tired and weak,
Pursued and tracked by It once more.

Sometimes this madness flies to towering heights,
Obscuring mind and sense and us of all our poise
Despoils. Poisoned bowl! sharp poniard! twilight!
And flung within the arms of the soft long night,
Hastening from earth's vulgar noise."

With that Charmides smiled his golden smile,
And looked with pity on us all awhile,
Then round him drew his chlamys, "It's time,
He cried, "A youth of wonderous form sublime
Awaits me. Fare ye well, before the dawn
Her amber curtain o'er the night has drawn,
I shall in love have learned how to forget."
Once more he smiled this time with faint regret,
Jestingly he spoke,—we inwardly trembled,
Altho' with wine and jovial sport dissembled
Carelessness. One by one each rose and fled
(Pursued by that black terror) to his bed.

To Alex, Tatiana and Charles.

IN SPRING.

Come with me to the land of the south,
Where the sunshine
Like golden wine
Quenches your delicate soul in drouth.

There at night crowned with the tuberoses,
Neath the new moon
In its cocoon
Of silken clouds that her smile enclose,

We will make love as southerners do,
In a fashion
Of subtle passion,
And forget we are apart, I and you.

A LOVER IN LESBOS.

Like rose-petals fall the days
 One by one,
And dimmed are the slanting rays
 Of the sun,
Night and morn the wind of time
 Like dry leaves
Sweeps away, and the poet's rhyme
 Gathers sheaves
Of song to lay at your feet.
 Shod with love
You speed thro' the long days, fleet
 Like a dove
Carelessly, and fashioning
 In your soul
A picture of me on wing
 Towards our goal.
A festival I prepare
 For those days,
Ah! could my heart so ensnare
 In its maze
Every thought, every desire
 Of your heart,
Could I fathom each suspire
 Sweet and tart,
And hold you fearless with joy
 In mine arms,

I should be once more a boy
With strange charms
Seducing you, and pleasing you
With passion,
Roman, Egyptian, Greek or new
In my fashion.

A LYDIAN MEASURE.

At Baiae the youths and maidens dance and sing
In Mercury's fane
The old profane
And pagan mysteries. In me is generating
Prenatal passions, Ah! were I in Spring,
A bird on wing
Circulating
Baiae, where the youths and maidens dance and sing!

Ad Iuliam.

THE ROSES OF SHIRAZ.

The rose-tree outlives the flowers
Lavishly spent in the summer,
And drags thro' the cold a mummer
Unrecognised by the singing showers.

But in the spring,
When on gay wing
The first birds circle in the air,
The tiny buds swell everywhere.

Will our love survive the embraces
And kisses proferred when we meet,
Those roses of passionate heat
We have culled in many places?

Or will it die
Neath autumn's sky,
Before there is ever a spring
In its bosom generating?

How could you ever have faith in me
(I with my thousand loves past),
Could I believe you who have cast
Aside thousands since infancy?

Yet your sweet soul
Offers its whole
Affectionate wonder to me,
Whither shall I fly to be free?

STORNELLO.

The night was hot, a tender moon
Cool radiance silently shed
Upon the motionless lagoon.
The drawn-out hours slowly bled
Themselves to death ; the shadows fled
To their hidden silken cocoon.

A song came thro' a maze of mist
Insistently nearer to me,
Sweeter than any rhapsodist
Was this lover of high degree,
His voice I knew, yet could not see
The lips I so often had kissed.

His spirit mounted on his song
To my arms—but I did not rise
From my bed tho' he waited long,
For I feared to give him the prize
He yearned for—women must be wise
For the gods did not make them strong.

Her basket of gorgeous flowers
The Dawn emptied into the sea,
Roses and lilies in showers
For her couch of adultery,
The Adriatic laughed at me
For the wasted golden hours.

Mysterious mistress is the Dawn
Replete with many moods perverse,
And yet her joys I would not pawn
For treasures of the Universe,
Women's caprices can disperse
Wisdom that from ages is drawn.

I rose—but as in a sweet dream
Suddenly a voice becomes mute,
The boat I heard move like a theme
Rhythmic forward and resolute,
Then with faint sound as from a lute
Dropt my tears on the empty stream.

To Eric.

PAVANE OF THE DUCHESS OF MEDINA.

Step lightly, little lady, lightly,
A heart is writhing neath your feet,
Smile brightly, little lady, brightly,
And hide that love so indiscreet.

Be wise, little lady, be wise,
The world is watching you, and more
Is bent unmasking tell-tale eyes,
And shutting you its jealous door,
And clawing from your soul the core
Than help our love to eternise.

Dance for me, my little lady,
My heart shall be the accompanying lyre,
Step lightly, little lady, lightly,
Elude the passion of my fire.

A NIGHTINGALE'S RHYME.

The gods made me the first songster of spring,
In my pulses new songs beat, scattering
When the first shoot
From its deep root
Breaks the thick clods of earth,
(Occult sepulchral girth).

'Twas on a night when the silent full moon
Sailed like silk o'er the waves, and a sweet croon
Rose from the sea
Seductively
That you climbed from your tomb
And cast away your gloom.

Like a pale slender flower I saw you rise
Painlessly, and donning your new disguise
With boyish joy
At this new toy,
Happy in loveliness
And tasting sweet success.

Far above the beat of the ocean rose
The song of my heart, and your life blood froze
With crazed delight
In its sweet might.
Our souls intermingled
With music surcingled.

It is thus that the red roses first hear
The nightingale's rhyme on the atmosphere,
And their breasts swell
Neath that strange spell,
Until the dawn full-blown
Finds them on the path strewn.

O, that my song may not lead you to death,
But into your waiting soul pour the breath
Of potent fire
With my desire,
And 'neath my trembling wing
Harboured, first flower of spring.

N I R V A N A .

My soul flew thro' the years, in front, behind,
Seeking like an erring bird some resting place
To perch his tired limbs upon in space ;
Human emotions sought of every kind,
Crowned his brow with jewels of the mind,
Let suffering's cilice his form embrace,
And sucked the mell of passion from the face
Of a God. Onward driven by a wind,
Flapping his wings on the swart breast of Night
In quest of rest, he is ever forward borne,
Struggling, grappling with Life, bruised and torn,
But hopeful that some day the incessant fight
Be over—blood be cool, nerves unshaken,
And all into one immense Thought be taken.

To Violet and Clarens Tweedale.

MADDALONI.

Pity me ! for life was so sweet
Hidden neath boschage ever-green
Where the hot sun was never seen
Stood my little blessed retreat.

Flowers were in blossom everywhere,
Magnolias raised waxen faces
Fringed with pointed verdant laces
To the brilliant azure air.

Neath the olives the violet
Purpled the shoots of the first spring grass,
Where the brook ran into a morass
The fern dipped its feather fronds wet.

At Maddaloni it is spring,
The almond neath the old wall in bloom
Touches the windows of my room,
Flowers in the breeze quivering.

And the snow-capped domes raise their heads
Far above the clouds—cold and still
They stand in their splendour and fill
The heart with awe. The fountain sheds

A pearl string of song in the court,
Where the sun the orange-blossom woos.
The dove softly to his mate coos,
Their love-making is sure but short.

Pity me ! for life was so sweet
Before you called me and I came,
Now would I go back, but my shame
Bars me from the joy of my retreat.

At Maddaloni it is spring,
The narcissi perfume the air,
Tho' broken my heart, it is there
At Maddaloni, dying !

To Muff.

LIGURIAN AUTUMN.

This is the Indian summer of our youth,
Unbidden surprise. How shall we appease
Bursting passions never brought to their knees,
Yielding, preserving the intricate truth
Of our composite being. Come, forget, forsooth,
With me on the shores of Ligurian seas,
Where love lies waiting neath sweet scented trees,
Such love never bought in bazaar or booth :
What care I if fateful tragedy roll
Its bitter cruel music o'er the floor
Of my awakened heart whose open door
Welcomes you. Secret fire into the bowl
I pour—come, drink of my fierce foaming soul,
Youth, Love and Passion to you I will restore.

Ad Iohannem.

SUNSET AT FIESOLE.

At Fiesole I feel a man,
But a man of doubtful virtue,
Unbared, unveiled I have seen as few
Florence, the beautiful courtesan.

Pink and white flesh and lizard green eyes,
Unashamed in the gold dusted light,
Eager supple thews rounded and white,
Full curved lips cruel, reddened with lies.

Red hair the colour of porphyry,
Small feet like a dancer with long toes,
Painted cheeks of vermilion and rose,
An untiring tongue of infamy.

Desire does not think, so I clasp
Her splendid naked body to mine,
Mingling mortal and immortal wine
In long drawn out kiss and passionate gasp.

Did you see, suddenly o'er her, shame
Dropped plumes of light fast rolling fire,
Dissolving love's heat and profane desire
In a gathered scroll of towering flame?

I D O L A T E R S .

I will go to Girgenti and worship the sun,
Leap in the air like a goat
When the warmth clasps my throat,
And dance to the pagan gods in frolic and fun.

From their hiding places they will creep out and come,
Straining me to panting breast,
Passionate creatures obsessed.
Give me a centaur's strength to be loved and be dumb !

S P O R T .

I shot at the wild years
As if they were birds,
Laid a trap for my tears
With sharp bitter words.

But the years slender-shaped
I missed, and my tears
Thro' the meshes escaped
Into the blank spheres.

To N. W.

FIVE O'CLOCK.

I had gathered a posy of violets for you
And played that you sent them to me,
An old love called and stayed to tea,
The flowers between did our passions renew.
"Someone sent them!" archly said she,
How could one with her disagree?
"I picked them for you, dear!" into my arms I drew
Her form, she kissed my lips untrue.

DAWN OVER SAN GIORGIO.

Pain will bind its laurel about your brow,
Gilded perhaps to hide the sharpened thorn,
Berries of gold will screen the soft flesh torn,
You will smile to the gaping crowd and bow
When with praise your little song they endow.
From travail and misery it was born
In the dawn of a Venetian morn,
Illegitimate offspring of our vow.

Do you remember the gondolier's croon,
As his boat out to the Lido he swung,
Like myriad mock lamps in the sky hung
The stars, illuming the pale passionate moon,
Lithe from the hips dancing the rigadoon
Seemed his form, and his vestments tightly clung?

CORNER OF THE PONTE STORTO.

Weary wends the waterway
Its course thro' square and street,
Full it is of mystery,
Dark in its wily ways and fleet.
On the corner stands a lamp
Illuminating foam
And river rush. But hark! the tramp
Of tired men slinking home.

To Wilfred.

THE EGYPTIAN BACCHUS IN THE VATICAN.

You are an Egyptian soul gone astray in western lands,
Filled with glories past are your eyes, your large face
Sculptured as from granite brought from arid sands.
Slim your form is, taut are the muscles, yet grace
Falls like a veil o'er you.

HERMES.

At Sestri there lives a boy
With Venus eyes and mouth of a saint,
I dare not delve those orbs without restraint
Of a savage pagan joy.

Cool are his lips, I have kissed them,
Odorate of sweet holiness his breath,
Calm, gentle and sacred as in death
Unforgettable I missed them.

THE LUTE-PLAYER.

I am only a lute-player in the street
Of shadows. Windows sometimes open wide
Behind me. The eyes of a newly-made bride
Jewelled with tears of gladness, oversweet
Are looking down on me from her retreat.
Laughter I hear, laughter she cannot hide,
Tho' tears her passionate joy divide.
I hear the pattering of children's feet
Light and young. From above flowers are thrown,
I pick them up, put them behind my ears
For I love flowers. They move my soul like tears.
Coins are rattling! I pick them from the stone,
For I love money. I must not raise my eyes,
Slowly I move on, playing my lute and wise.

To Mrs. Cloudesley Brereton.

SPRING DANCE.

At Portofino in the spring time
Lightly my feet on violets dance,
Like a caress of sudden romance,
When the olive-clad hill-side I climb.

Are you waiting for me neath the trees,
Expectant with your heart beating wild?
Love, my soul is coming undefiled
Dancing to the music of the breeze.

DREAMS AT ESTE.

Astor ! Like shadows each other we passed,
Like shadows we mingled in that long night,
My olive skin next yours of dazzling white.
Can wonder and beauty like this ever last,
Or follow the path of death and be classed
With faded flowers, and the waning light
Of rich sunsets o'er plains golden and vast,
And wonderful things that slip out of sight ?
For your scented breath still floats in my room
From floor to ceiling. In my troubled sleep,
A phantom it rises from my heart's deep
And becomes your white body in the gloom,
From your lips I draw in that strange perfume,
And passionate joys o'er my trembling limbs creep.

THE GIFT OF FATE.

I dream of you in an Orient dawn,
Of pale pink woven in delicate gold,
Falling round your slender form fold on fold.
I dream your fickle heart to mine is drawn.

I know 'tis but a momentary craze.
'Tis for a lover you move in the dance
With voiceless feet, side-long seductive glance
From your eyes, the colour of chrysoprase.

I dream I know all these things and don't care.
Only of your silver body I think,
Your flower-like hands, polished sharp nails and pink,
And the dark hidden recesses of your hair.

I dream you bring them to me when the star,
The Lambent Flame of morning, is still bright,
"Take me, I am yours for the rest of the night,"
And your voice comes like sweet music from far.

Thus I loved you madly, wishing for death,
Survival to me meant a living tomb,
But fate would not alter the drastic doom,
Life she gave to the guardian of my breath.

T O L L .

Behind impregnable barriers concealed
Within the fastnesses of my soul
Lies my inmost home. Mists from the valleys roll
Upward and vanish. The door unrevealed
To all leads to sanctuary where healed
Are bleeding wounds and sudden unknown dole,
Seductive passions waiting for their toll,
Griefs that ages long my lips have sealed.
Countless brutes have followed in hot pursuit
My footsteps there—but force of no avail,
No matter with what means they did assail,
But you I found entreating with sweet bruit
Outside and let you in. What will be the fruit
Of this weakness and the price of will so frail?

VEGLIONE.

My blood is red as scarlet flowers
O'erhead suspended in the vaulted room,
And hot as the light that's filtering through,
British slave ! I love you !

In manhood tall and strong from hours
Spent in athletic exercise. What gloom
Is creeping o'er the day-blue of your eyes ?
British slave ! Do not deny.

It is a Roman cloud that passes by,
And risen sudden from Ostia's shore,
A cloud of golden curls and stormy eyes,
Orbs, the uncertain colour of Roman skies.

So tired am I—one second let me lie
On your heart, mine is weary and sore,
A cloud am I just, passing soon.
British slave ! you are the moon !

To Oscar.

THE PAROLE.

All have loved you for the outward mould
In exotic charm garmented,
And the exquisite golden thread
Of spirit in its lovely fold.

But when I hold your head in my hands
Deep in your eyes I find your soul,
And I possess it on parole,
Obeying me and my commands.

IN A BYE-STREET AT MANTUA.

'Twas last night I waited in rain neath high eaves,
Waited long for you and each drop a false step
Scorned and mocked me. From the old tree the last leaves
Fell to the ground and whirled away to sleep
 Down in the gutter.

FLIGHT.

To-day the sun had cloven the black rain clouds in twain,
A flight of birds I saw in the West.
Ah ! could I immerse my sorrows in snow and wind and rain,
And like the fowl be finding my nest.

ASSUNTA'S VOW.

Like the bee I would suck the flower
And fly away to another with ease.
Come therefore to-night to the garden and seize
The sweets of my lips and their passionate dower,
Fill with glory an unforgettable hour.
Orange blossoms, marriage blooms, from the trees
Will drop their perfume your senses to tease,
I will forget myself in Love's power.
To-morrow I shall pass you in the street
Like an old friend, smiling and debonair,
So proud and distant that you would not dare
Last night's intimacies, nor would your feet
Want to wander last night's ways. I would meet
Comrade-like your advances and not care.

IN THE REIGN OF NERO.

Last night on the altar of Venus I spent

My last dime.

Subtle romance Night to my love lent.

The first time

It seemed that my blood now in flame could forget

My sacrifice,

Thrown at your white feet without regret,

Paying your price.

That coin in its vulgar and commonplace dress

Stood for bread,

Food for the blood rushing in madness

Hot and red,

Thro' veins overfilled with the passions of years

(Passions withheld !)

Stored in the depths mixed with absurd tears,

By those swelled.

That execrable Emperor's head was the door

Betwixt me

And that tender breath which men call life, for

In it they see

Prolonged their secreted sensual desires,

Delirious night,

Lecherous transport 'midst the frenzied fires

Of lustful delight.

And what will it bring me, to-morrow? When Dawn,
The gilt thief
Crawls on the sky-line, the abject spawn!
I would lief
Been left twixt the breasts of the deep-bosomed night,
And thus die
Wrapt in myself, caught up in mad flight
Away and high.

But see! thro' the casement there comes a warm light,
Tis violet,
Carmine and blue, green, and the near sight
Suspends wet
And silvery fringes on my opened eyes,
For 'tis you!
Goddess! outrun Aurore in the gilt skies,
Mistress true!

"Not gold I am bringing nor Fame understand,
Nor friend strong
Fighting your cares. No! for in my small hand
This tender song
I hold like a garland and bind round your head
Its laurel,
Take it and make music" low you said.
Neath that spell
I sang—'tis the last feeble strain I may thread
Before I am dead.

BERCEUSE.

How the wind sweeps the foam
Like white smoke
With one stroke
Up into the azure dome !

Would I were a sea-gull,
Feather-decked
And unflecked,
Cradled by the waves' lull !

Ad Amicam

TO A FAMOUS POET.

Love to you is just a strong tool of success,
You have mounted the ladder of fame by us,
Not thro' merit. Talent you have draped in the dress,
Foolish vulgar dress of supposed genius.

Thus you have ascended.

Had your silly travesties but one faint spark
Of fire, had your characters but one weak drop
Of blood, you would be in our heav'n the sky lark
Thrilling all with chansons immortal—but stop!

Idle fancy! You milk-sop!

C R E E D .

To live in light, with light and yet not die,
To be entangled in a web so bright
Of mysteries, so intense, that only by
Ceaseless unravelling long, and stubborn fight
You are free,
No, that cannot and shall not be.

With love, in love to live and yet not fear
To lose the ideal trappings in your mind,
Those veils that men have never dared to tear
Aside—to leave the past so far behind
That you are free,
No, that cannot and shall not be.

But that one moment you can grasp from all
The fast and fluttering crowd and hold it tight,
And from it suck it's soul,
Then fill the empty waiting bowl
To gradual overflowing—that I call
Truth—cling on to that Light !

To Gerald.

ASHES.

We have squandered our youth in devious ways
On shadows, each waiting
For someone to love, mating
With spurious dreams. And now from this maze
We are drawn together like flames in a blaze.

NOCTURNE D SHARP MINOR.

Sing my soul, a song for thyself and fear not,
No one lists nor cares if 'tis merry or sad,
All too busy carving their lives they hear not
Melodies of exquisiteness, fashioned and clad
Richly in sumptuous raiment.

They have passed the stage where emotions waken
Intellectual feelings, for now they desire
Atmosphere, degenerate debauch and mistaken
Thoughts of pleasure, when in their souls the low fire
Need not be stirred.

Sing my soul a song for I am still alive
Mongst this mammon-worshipping herd of small men,
Midst this hive of drones that in sloth and filth thrive.
Must I expiate then, O gods, in this den
For some former transgression?

"Is it not gorgeous?" said an old hen of my song,
"I have always loved it! It is the Nocturne?"
"Not so?" Only manners saved me. "You are wrong
Madame," answered I perfectly charming, but burn
On my lips did, "Old Cackle-chaps!"

IN THE TEMPLE OF SERAPIS.

When I see the pale sun quiver and frown on the wall
Because the fog and cloud he cannot pierce,
I picture his face blazing and fierce
In the white court of Serapis, where the nightingales call
To each other long before the shadows of night fall.

Like a lizard on a broken column I have lain,
Stretched neath the rays, each one a fire-edged sword,
Dissecting fibres and nerves until I am gored
With warmth and delight. Unpleasant memories of pain
Seem obscured, a song of joy are my body and brain.

Now can I invent philosophies, for I do not ache
In every crevice of my soul with cold ;
Life is a joyous dancer keen and bold,
Clasped round his feet are little golden love-bells that make
A tinkling sound like a fountain, but I am half-awake.

L A R G E S S .

The god in me I willing give to make
The wine for which you are the bowl,
The greater that receptacle, the more
Celestial dulcet music can I pour
Into the waiting vacuum of your soul.
That which is god in me, take !

To Ian.

IN THE MARSHES OF THE PO.

About my arm it playfully twined
The little water-snake,
In river-rushes I had caught it
And vicious beast ! how long I fought it,
Eluding me before, behind,
 You little water-snake !

In rage it bit me—a sharp pain
 Ran thro' my hand.
Anger obsessed me, I was insane,
 I flung you in the sand,
My heel upon your head, villain,
 You little water-snake !

SAPPHIC.

Night it was when first on thy lips I kissed thee,
Time ! hast thou then caught us so soon ? Behold, Love !
Here comes Dawn, the thief, and his feet are masked with
Golden-wrought sandals.

ENVOI.

We shall rush to each other's arms
Like waves in a high tumbling sea,
Vowing Love and fidelity,
Prodigal in our secret charms.

I shall be cast on land and left,
To the wild breakers you will return,
For your senses with wild things burn
As fire consumes silken weft.

Stranger ! carry my body back
To Maddaloni where it is spring,
And nightingales are carolling,
Bring me back there ! you know the track.

THE BRIDGE OF SIGHS.

I build a bridge for my soul
 To come to yours,
Each stone a memory of some look,
Each arch a poem of some book,
Beneath the waters all roll
 To unknown shores.

No moonlight shines on us to-night,
 The stars only
In dark waves flash and play below,
The dancing forms in half-light grow
Dimmer away from my sight
 Towards the deep sea.

And your great soul stands next to mine,
 A phantom true.
We gaze into the star-lit stream,
In your dark eyes a passionate gleam
Betrays your heart, drink, drink the wine
 To me and you !

S A I N T S E B A S T I A N .

Against the Spanish tapestry of my door,
A subtle design of peacock's feathers fine,
Like Renaissance Saint you stood in a shrine,
Saint Sebastian, of suffering conqueror.

Your eyes intense blue like the peacock's eye
In the feather, and your lips in a smile
Disdaining pain were a passionate lure, while
Your head defiant was raised to the sky.

BACCHIC FESTIVAL.

White feet like driven snow,
White bare feet o'er the parquet floor,
And floating draperies, laughing eyes,
Those orbs the colour of purple skies,
The clang of cymbal, song of oboe—
A Faun that watches at the door.

His soul, a burning passionate red
Like scarlet blood from arteries drawn,
One second in his eyes she gazed,
Her mouth to him in kiss she raised,
And passed into the soul of the Faun.

Red feet—a brilliant red,
Red bare feet o'er the parquet floor.
The clang of cymbal—violin-wail,
A woman faint with love and pale,
A Faun that watches at the door.

D U S K .

Each time that you come to my arms
It will be spring.
Like bird on wing,
Nestwards flying,
You will think of peace and its charms.
Tho' our hearts beat madly at first,
In hasty heat
When love complete
In calm we meet,
Having quenched our passionate thirst.

THE PHILOSOPHER.

Your heart is like a river,
Deep and full of mysteries.
Upon its banks the tall trees
Mirror themselves in the quiver

Of its polished surface, white
In the sun's noonday splendour.
Early spring flowers tender
Bend o'er the stream in moonlight,

And kiss their reflections sweet
Like little children. Upon
The heaving breast lilies wan
Raise their faces to the heat.

I can sit and dream all day
Next your heart and never tire,
Purge my soul of all desire,
Fondle you and with you play.

Underneath the sable flow
Great beauties are born and burn,
Your soul for untold things yearn,
Love and pity live, I know.

In the waters my small hands
I dip. Your spirit is cool.
Perhaps I am but a fool
Believing, who understands.

IN THE GARDEN OF THE STOIC.

Chide me not that like a nightingale
I sing and philosophy evade,
For thus the generous gods my soul made,
Singing to all the world my heart's tale.

Once I remember in argument
Neath rose-arbours with someone you sate,
A sudden thrill of joy trembled, "Wait"
You said, listening stirred, gravely intent.

All the mysteries of your brain forgot
The entangled logic, the thesis clear,
Your heart was swung to where you were not,
It heard what your mind could never hear.

When you read the smooth metres that flow
Passionately like waves out at sea,
Think I am one of those songsters who know
Love and Life without philosophy.

To Mrs. Villiers Taylor.

CARNIVAL.

A pierrot is holding me in his arms.
I cannot stir. Ah! could I!

Let me go,
Pierrot,
I will shriek and fight and they will hear my alarms.

The maidens are dancing in the street,
Down there the music is wild,
Look there! Columbine is fleet
Escaping the arms of a lusty child.

Let me go! Already Dawn
Is slinking into yon sky—my face
Is pale, I know, and tired and drawn.

Let me go!
Pierrot, thro' grace
To you I came a passing dream,
Let me only be what I seem
Kiss me! Pierrot!

Kiss me, and let me go!

GIANNINO'S DREAM.

Often you come to me in dream, sad, pale,
Hungring for beauty. I take your hands,
Your spirit submissive to my commands
Flutters like the soul of a nightingale,
When in song tremblant she cries for her male,
And with winged feet we alight upon the sand
Of the Lido in Venice, of all strands
The most romantic. For thro' a dim veil
I make you see the city spun like gold
In a soft glimmering mass of blue brocade,
On whose sheen sparkles the colours of jade,
Emerald, and sapphire; concealed in the fold
Your shy tender soul mingles with mine bold,
Our bodies unite in love unafraid.

G E M I N I .

Like a lover I love you, like a brother I love you,
And tho' these two loves differ as the heavens above you
Differ from this crust, teeming with life,
Between their souls there cannot be strife.
As earth is in the heavens suspent
And the sky casts o'er it its blue tent,
Intersewn with myriads of stars,
So my one love the other unbars.

For the lover in me of all the flowers on the earth
Compounded, and the lilting songs of its poets since birth,
Has loved beauty in creature and flower
Passionately, and with secret power.
And the brother in me has shed tears
When a heart broke neath burdensome fears,
And on my body the stripes I bore
For another whose image I wore.

A DREAM-GARDEN AT MONDRAGONE.

To the south where the orange-flower lies
Like still scented snow on the wind-woo'd trees,
And the perfume floats on the purple seas
Greedily sucked in by waves, my spirit flies
Unhaltingly, till he opens his eyes
To golden sun, palpitating, humming bees,
A lazy sweet emasculating breeze,
And Love welcoming me with shy surprise.
The copper moon burnished for my delight
Spins a mysterious web o'er the flowers,
Roses, freed from their prison, people Night
With exultant lovers in laurel bowers,
And you creep forth from your tomb, trembling, white
To my arms. Ah ! the wild passionate hours !

ESTIMATE.

Him in whose arms I am the last
I love the most.
That is my boast,
For men, the brutes, will from them cast
My tender soul,
When at Love's goal
They push me from them into the past.

SANCTUARY.

In your heart for myself I have built a shrine
Architected skilfully and with care,
I carved twixt its slender pillars everywhere
Flowered posies of exquisite design.
The frieze I sculptured out of the hot wine
Of madly beating hearts and perfumed hair,
And like a painted mantle, music rare
I threw o'er its throbbing structure divine.
When you listen again to songs of spring
Maybe in the hill-towns of Italy,
Perugia, Siena or Assisi,
You will feel the throb of my soul clamouring,
Those moments we lived, remembrance will bring
To your heart of one lone in agony.

CONFITEOR.

Inordinate greed for gold it was,
The bright gold floating in your hair,
Dusting your silken tresses fair,
Lurking in masses fold on fold,
As round your classic head they rolled,
It was for gold I loved you
I confess.

It was my passion for the rose,
The bloom that on your pale cheeks grew
And flowered scarlet oft when you
Were stirred. As some breeze softly blows
Its breath on feathery shrubs in rows
Your red lips quivered. 'Twas for those
I loved you, I confess!

And for your sculptured figure tall,
Bestial violence betraying,
Commanding, ruling, breaking, swaying,
Scorning, driving by your beauty all,
Obliging all the cringing world to fall
And worship you—be at your beck and call.
For that I loved you, I confess.
Your soul I could not get to know,
That part to me you dared not show,
Confess!

THE CONQUEROR.

You and I were together once born, O my soul,
Tender years past us rolled full of beauty and song,
Passions shared and in sorrow were mates ; on its scroll
Life had written us one 'mongst innumerable throng
Of manhood so strong.

Without warning to-day from my arms you have fled,
Shut the door that not once in these years has been closed,
(Are you weeping, my soul ?) I can hear a light tread
Up and down in the room with strange sobs interposed,
Because I proposed,

You and I should not part in this world or the next,
Tramp together the track of this hand span of life,
Fight and perish together. For that, are you vexed ?
Would you rather be free, overcome your own strife,
By me not perplexed ?

Are you sad, O my soul, and have fled to be lone ?
Oft your tears I have kissed from your eyes ; let me in,
Let me in, O my soul, for I want to atone
If I have sinned against you, are you there blessed twin ?
Still weeping within ?

Only winds I hear sobbing and waves as they beat
Curious rhythms of old on the shore. Why are you still?
Are you dead, O my soul? Give response, I entreat.
Silence still. I shall break down the door with my will.
A strange icy chill

Takes possession of me. I am sick, do you hear?
Sick of longing, and once you did come when I called;
I shall die without you. Have you ceased then to care?
Silence still. Have you lost then the key? Are you walled
Up, love, within there?

Mad with fear, with a puissance unknown I then tore
Down the door. What was that, like a wind past me brushed,
Icy cold, and a perfume of Death in its core?
Was it you, O my soul, that escaped, past me rushed
The Conqueror?

To M.T.D.

A F T E R .

I have sought comfort from everything,
Opening his arms like a lover, Fame
Seduced me with promises of a name,
Splendid and jewelled like crown of a king ;
I followed. A sweet ephemeral spring,
Passionate aspiration, devouring flame,
And after it all the bitterness came.
Thro' the trees Love danced flowers offering.
Were his eyes blue like yours, or green or black?
No matter, but in their depths secrets lay
That have always led the human mind astray.
No power, no god could now hold me back.
And after, Love cast me aside with a pack
Of others, the quarry of that wild day.

FLAVIO'S WARNING.

For me love not manifest
At its best
Is a dull unformed thing.

And love is for years of youth,
Splendid truth !
When passions are in spring.

The first blossom gladdens most,
For the ghost
Of satisfied desire

Is near. Come, still your craving,
All braving,
In my soft lips of fire.

For should you from me withhold
The joy untold,
Another I must with you share ;

You will hold my soul in bond,
Here and beyond,
Another my body—beware !

A SILVER CUP.

Your head lay back in the light of the moon
Like a silver cup with mysteries replete,
The waves came out of the sea with winged feet
Dancing the ancient measures to the croon
Of the gods, begging for the secret boon
From your lips over-red and ripe and sweet.
What perverse passions to strange maddened heat
Have they not stirred in some boy's heart too soon?
Oh! that I could buy you body and soul!
The metal your flesh, and the chiselled shape
From the crown of your head to the curved nape
The breath of the artist, as in the whole
Compound he breathed the fire of desired goal,
And I shall carry you home neath my cape.

NOCTURNE B MAJOR.

All day like happy birds from fruit
For sweetness we flutter with bruit
To many flowers for their scent
In abandon and ravishment.
Then comes the night
Squisite delight !

Neath silken shelter of one tree,
Hearing faint music from the sea,
We come together and your soul
Pours unrestrained forth its whole
Enchanted song
Passionate and long.

At midnight a strained silence steals
Between us slowly and congeals
Our heart beats like a glacial mist,
A swift embrace and shyly kissed,
Heart to heart pressed,
A throbbing breast,

And lone I stand beneath the stars
Riding thro' heaven in jewelled cars,
Desiring, every pulse on fire
To hold you thro' the night entire
With subtle charms
Within my arms.

Do not my lips tempt you? for they
In their scarlet softness betray
A juicy sweetness like a fruit
Ripe for a brave lover's pursuit.
Like passion flowers
Wound round bowers,

Are my eyes. Do they not in you
Thousand fatal yearnings renew?
And the soft texture of my skin
At Baiae like the scent of sin
One said, who clung
To me and flung

All shame aside ; and then again
Incense exotic in profane
And ancient temples burnt there seemed
When Life exalted past me streamed
As offering
To Love, the King !

My body's wanton suppleness
That moves like a rhythmic caress
Will you not come and from it learn
Love's secrets that palpitate and burn
At dead of night
With appetite ?

In it lies waiting paradise
Neath that ivory sculptured guise
For you, if you would only claim
The key that separates the flame
From my sweet fire
And your desire.

You will flood the world with melody
After. Throb and heart beat of the sea
You will weave with flowers of spring,
And wild kisses all fashioning
 A crown of sound,
 And tightly bound

About your pallid brow in fame,
And linked together our name
Will tread history's rugged path.
For me happiness the aftermath,
 Laurel for you
 Gilded and new.

Alas! again the midnight calls,
Upon my soul a cold pall falls,
We act once more the old pretence,
Your hurried kiss neath stars and hence
 Like bird at night
 Pass out of sight.

NORADINO.

As in Brancalone's arms I lay,
Tasting the brutal strength of southern heat,
And the cool silences my trembling feet
Had trod so often on shores of the bay,
Carved in sapphire, tipped with silver spray,
By the erring moon on its bosom ; sweet
Unbidden memories of a joy complete
With you drew my warm lips from his away.

· If Brancalone were only you,
If you were Brancalone we would
Possess in splendid perfect brotherhood
Love, friendship and passion without purlieu,
Now each of these with heat I must pursue
To still the burning instincts of my mood.

QUESTS.

Love I sought and found it I thought, but one night
Burst my short illusions, betrayed I stood lone ;
Pieced together fragments of life, the close fight
Fought on without moan.

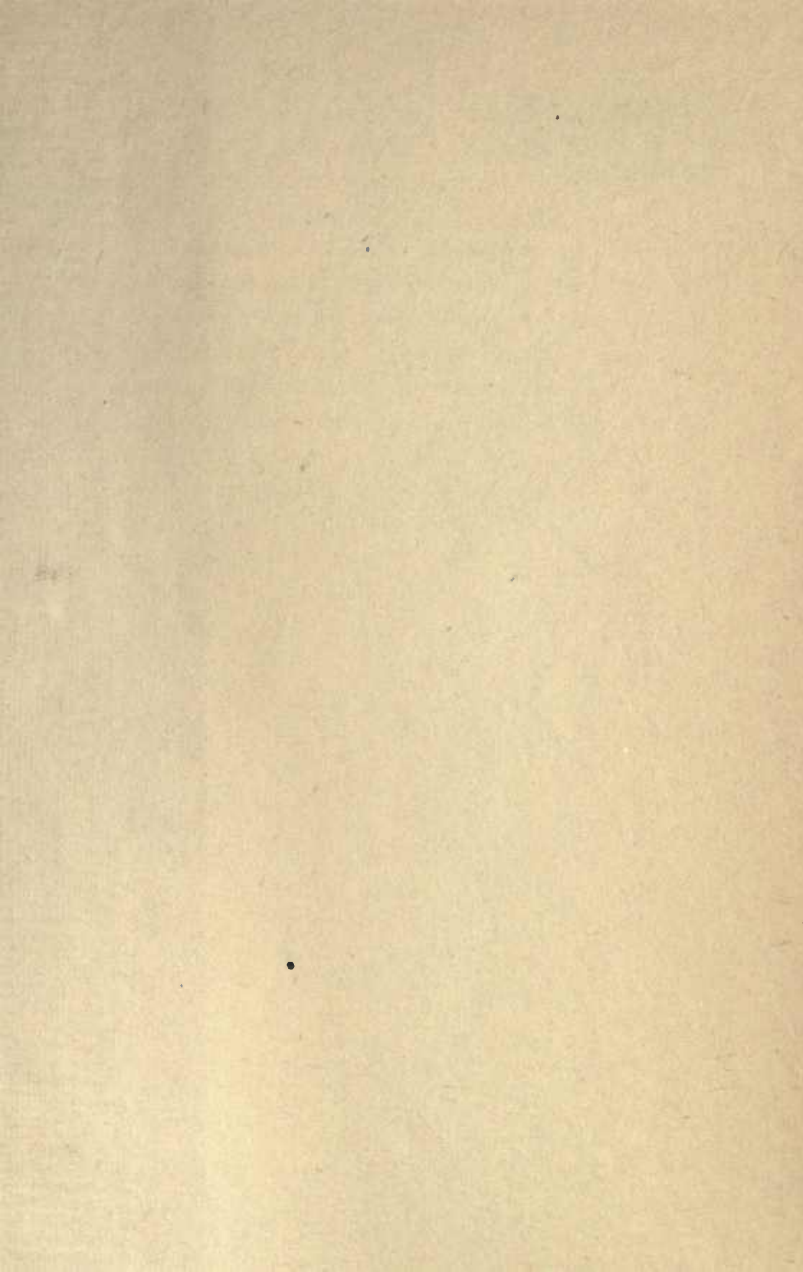
Passion sought and found I thought ; the pale dawn
Sick disgust and painfulest mem'ries light threw
On your face serene in its sleep, the lids drawn
Tight o'er your eyes blue.

God I sought and found Him I thought, and found joy,
Oft frequenting churches, attending much prayer,
Seeking Him in those like a foolish rough boy
Follows things, here, there.

Happiness I sought and it found I thought, some
Grief seduced from your stricken heart—to-day passed
We each other swift in the street our lips dumb,
Eyes in hate down-cast.

AFTER THE FEAST OF ROSES.

Upon his ears beat the awakening drum
Of the city's rumble. Like breaking seas,
Sighing and passionate in the morning breeze,
Appeared to him that dim and far off hum,
Swaying further and nearer, burthensome
With human heart-aches. Like the mumbling bees,
Roused in a summer dawn from drowsy ease,
To him half-asleep the sound seemed to come.
Of the Feast of Roses what now remains?
His eyes travelled thro' the half-open door
To the next room sun-spangled, on the floor
Upon the Shiraz rug still dreamt the faint strains
Of hestern's wild music of throbbing hearts,
Shrivelled leaves, rose-scent, dead love's counterparts.





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